

DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Tuesday 4th December 2024

1. **Present:** Alison Davies (Chair), Andrew Senior (Co-Chair), Jerry Bishop, Richard Hickson, Fiona McKinlay (Minutes).
Apologies: Fiona Hampton
In Attendance: Lynne Mahoney, Peter Wild
2. **Declarations of Interest**
None
3. **Minutes of meeting held on 8th October 2024**
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
4. **Matters Arising**
 - a: *VIP Official Opening:* - AD received a negative response from the most recent celebrity invited. JB will now approach a local author through personal contacts.
 - b: *Reception for Local Dignitaries and Funders:* - AD reported that the event held on the evening of 15th November 2024 had been successful. Community Councillors attended and AD/AS took the opportunity to demonstrate the need for mobile shelving in the archive. An order is now being progressed for same.
 - c: *Post Excavation Programme:* - see Museum Committee minutes for full details. It is expected that this will link into other excavation projects ongoing at the time.
5. **Financial Reports**
 - a: *Museum Financial Reports*

JB presented data to show that the museum recorded 209 visitors in November, including 26 people who attended a walking tour, leading to a total income of £950. Many visitors came specifically to view the tapestries displayed in the Hub. Gifts and book sales added a further £650. Overall, admissions income in the year to date has exceeded all previous years. All involved were sincerely thanked for their efforts.

As museum finances may be tight towards the end of the financial year, AD has submitted an application to Garfield Weston for funding for operational support.

FM/JB had updated the Reserved Funds Register detailing all current project funding positions and JB gave an overview.
 - b: *Heritage Hub Finances*

JB gave an update on Project Finances. All monies due have now been received and all outstanding invoices paid. It is expected that in addition to all the items listed in the Heritage Lottery project grant, funds will be available for the installation of a new shelving system in the archive room and a defibrillator, leaving a small surplus yet to be appropriated.

c: *DHSCIO Business Plan*

JB/RH advised that they have had an initial meeting and plan to meet again in January 2025.

6. Financial Reports

a: *Museum Committee Report*: - the latest draft minutes had been circulated.

b: *Curator Report*: - Report dated 19th November circulated.

LM advised that a project put on hold in 2019 on David Maxwell Fyfe, a Human Rights lawyer with an inspiring career, will be progressed. 'English Cabaret' has written a song cycle on his life and have asked to perform it in the museum. A performance in Dornoch Cathedral is planned for Friday, 20th June 2025 which LM will facilitate. Local schoolchildren will be involved. Local dignitaries and Fyfe family members will be invited to attend and to come over to the Heritage Hub for a reception after the performance. The event will be widely advertised and media attention sought.

LM reported that she has had contact from a Canadian lady who had seen the article on The Nancy in The Herald and whose forebears sailed over to North America on the ship. Anne Munro and David Mackay were indentured servants who served 4 years in the United States before relocating to Canada. The lady plans to sail over to Scotland herself in 2025 or 2026. LM will maintain contact with her and will send her a link to the video of the commemoration service.

c: *DHS Committee Report*: PW advised that the annual Film Evening will be held on 13th December 2024 and the Burns Supper in January 2025.

7. Governance

a: *Annual Accounts and Annual Report*: - JB reported that the accountant has approved the accounts and these, together with the Annual Report, will now be updated to the OSCR website.

b: *Membership Records*: - JB has set up a trial page on the 'membermojo' website, with a view to transferring the management and administration of our membership records, registrations, payments, etc., from the current manual system to this largely automated system. It was agreed to take this forward.

c: *Pinehurst Residents*: - it is proposed that an international membership category will be created, providing those who join with, for example, biannual newsletters and free entry to the museum once a year. AD will take this forward with her contacts at Pinehurst. As this will require a change to the constitution, an EGM may need to be convened in due course if matters move forward before the next AGM is due to be held.

d: *Succession Planning*: - it is hoped that a new trustee will join the Board at the next scheduled meeting.

Governance Review Recommendations

a: *Consultation with Museum Sub Committee*: - at the last meeting, committee members accepted the changes to the Terms of Reference. It was agreed that items under consideration for entry to the archive will in future pass through the Archive Committee before being presented to the Museum Sub Committee to avoid unnecessary duplication of acquisitions.

b: *Trustee Role Description*: - AD had circulated a proposed description which was agreed by the Board. An induction pack will be designed for new trustees.

c: *Next Steps on Recommendations*: with regard to the redesign of the organisational structure, AD and AS proposed changing the name of the charity from Dornoch Heritage SCIO to Dornoch Heritage Society. This will require the current Dornoch Heritage Society sub committee to change its name to Friends of Dornoch Heritage Society. PW will take this to the next meeting of the sub

committee for approval. It was further agreed that either AD or AS, in their capacity as Chair of the charity, will be added as signatory to the sub committee's bank account.

8. A.O.C.B.

Due to pressure of work resulting from the construction and opening of the new Heritage Hub, the deadline for applying for the 2025 Art Fund Museum of the Year has been missed. It was agreed to apply for the 2026 award.

9. Date of next meeting

11th February 2025, 10.30am. Historylinks Museum Community Room. A calendar of meetings for 2025 was proposed and accepted.